

illness to easily bypass the criminal background check system and buy firearms at gun shows, through private sellers, over the internet or out of the trunks of cars.

Strengthen the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) database to ensure it is up to date by requiring federal and state agencies to transfer important records to the database expeditiously since without the information, the reliability of a background check is questionable.

Pass legislation aimed specifically at cracking down on illegal gun trafficking and straw-purchasing which often puts guns in the hands of people who are prohibited from having them.

Straw-purchasing is when a prohibited buyer has someone with no criminal history walk into a gun store, pass a background check and purchase a gun with the purpose of giving it to the prohibited buyer.

Restore funding for public safety and law enforcement initiatives aimed at reducing gun violence.

Congress should fund law enforcement's efforts to reduce gun violence, while supporting federal research into causes of gun violence.

There is no reason the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) or the National Institute of Health (NIH) should be prohibited from researching the causes of gun violence.

That is why I have co-sponsored H.R. 1832, legislation that authorizes the appropriation of funds to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for conducting or supporting research on firearms safety or gun violence prevention.

I have also co-sponsored H.R. 1478, the Gun Violence Research Act, which repeals the provision that in practice prohibits the Department of Health and Human Services from sponsoring research on gun violence.

And there is no reason for the restrictions federal law places on our law enforcement officers' ability to track and combat the spread of illegal guns.

Close the holes in our mental-health system and make sure that care is available for those who need it.

Congress must improve prevention, early intervention, and treatment of mental illness while working to eliminate the stigma associated with mental illness.

Access to mental health services should be improved, the shortage of mental health professionals should be addressed, and funding should be made available for those programs that have proven to be effective.

That is why I have co-sponsored H.R. 1982, the "Mental Health Access and Gun Violence Prevention Act," legislation that authorizes the Department of Justice, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the Social Security Administration to: (1) increase access to mental health care treatment and services, and (2) promote reporting of mental health information to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System.

Help local communities get unwanted and illegal guns out of the hands of those who should not have them.

Congress should help support and develop local programs that get unwanted guns off our streets, such as gun buy-back programs that proved so effective in Australia.

Finally, we must address our culture's glorification of violence seen and heard through our movie screens, television shows, music and video games.

Congress should fund scientific research on the relationship between popular culture and gun violence, while ensuring that parents have access to the information they need to make informed decisions about what their families watch, listen to, and play.

Here is what I think neither the President, the Congress, nor state and local governments should not do to reduce gun violence.

We should not arm teachers because they are not trained to handle weapons; this is not what they signed up for.

We must not surrender to NRA even though the gun lobby has long enjoyed tremendous influence over congressional Republicans and some Democrats.

Persons who live in fear of gun violence and mass shootings at schools, theaters, places of worship and work, and public spaces are not afraid of the NRA.

What they are afraid of is an AR-15 in the hands of a mentally unstable person.

Americans are a can-do people; we do not bemoan our problems and accept terrible outcomes.

We act to solve them.

We have made our cars and trucks and roads safer and reduced traffic fatalities.

We have virtually eradicated polio, small pox, and other debilitating and life-threatening diseases.

We respond immediately to natural disasters caused by hurricanes, earthquakes, tornados, floods, and man-made disasters caused by acts of terrorism.

When it comes to reducing or preventing gun violence, we must summon that same spirit of American resolve and know-how and get the job done.

We can do it; after all, we are Americans.

IN HONOR OF TASHA MCKELVEY FOR EARNING THE SPAATZ AWARD AND RANK OF CADET COLONEL IN THE CIVIL AIR PATROL

HON. LIZ CHENEY

OF WYOMING

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 5, 2018

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Cadet Colonel Tasha McKelvey on earning the Spaatz award and the rank of cadet colonel in the Civil Air Patrol.

The Spaatz Award is the highest cadet honor in the Civil Air Patrol, given to less than one percent of all cadets. It acknowledges those who have demonstrated excellent leadership, character, fitness, and aerospace knowledge in the CAP Cadet Program. During her time in the Wyoming Wing of the CAP, Ms. McKelvey has done just that. Among her peers, she is a leader and source of inspiration for inspiration during trying times. Her determination and grit also resulted in her passing the Spaatz exam on her first try, a rarity across the nation.

Ms. McKelvey is the first female and the sixth cadet within the Wyoming Wing to receive the Spaatz Award. I thank her for her commitment to serve our great nation. Her bravery, sacrifice, and resolve are truly admirable. Ms. McKelvey has set an excellent example to her family, friends, and peers.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Cadet Colonel Tasha McKelvey on

receiving the Civil Air Patrol's highest cadet honor, the Spaatz Award and the rank of cadet colonel. She and her family deserve to be extremely proud.

COMMEMORATING THE 165TH ANNIVERSARY OF STEINWAY & SONS

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 5, 2018

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 165th anniversary of a Queens treasure, and one of the world's most iconic brands—Steinway & Sons.

Steinway makes world-renowned pianos, distinguished for their grandness and masterful craftsmanship. Each piano consists of more than 12,000 individual parts, and is said to have its own musical character as unique as the individual who plays it. These magnificent works of art, I am proud to say, are made in my district.

The Steinway legacy dates back to 1853, when Heinrich Engelhard Steinway founded Steinway & Sons in New York, a few years after emigrating from Germany. The high quality and meticulous craftsmanship of Steinway's pianos led to rapid growth for the business and the opening of a factory in Queens. Along with the factory, the Steinway family established a company town, Steinway Village, which spurred development in the neighborhoods that are today known as Astoria and Long Island City in Queens, and they spread their family values of investing in community. The philanthropic work of the Steinway family endures today throughout Queens and New York City.

That same factory, which first opened in the early 1870s, continues to operate today. The historic factory has been producing the world's finest pianos, virtually uninterrupted, for more than 145 years. Today, the factory employs over 300 union craftspeople, and many more people in management, administrative and sales roles in New York and throughout America. Steinway & Sons is an American success story, integral not only to the history of the borough of Queens and New York City, but also to the cultural story of the United States of America. It is a jewel that elevates American craftsmanship and innovation throughout the world.

As a lifelong musician and a son of Queens, it is with great pride that I celebrate the 165th anniversary of the world's number one piano, New York's very own Steinway & Sons.

IN RECOGNITION OF JOHN PALLONE

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 5, 2018

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure and pride that I rise today to congratulate my brother, Long Branch Councilman John Pallone, on his selection as the Amerigo Vespucci Society Man of the Year. I joined the Amerigo Vespucci Society on March 3, 2018 at their 125th dinner gala to celebrate John and recognize his outstanding work.